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(IL)LEGALITY IN CONSUMPTION OF A LEGAL SUBSTANCE: A CASE STUDY ON ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION AMONG TEENS

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Decree-Law 9/2002, of January 24, prohibits the sale of alcohol to under-16 years old (n.1, art. 2nd) and its consumption in public places and in places open to the public (n.2, idem). However, our experience of observation, confirmed by the testimonies of respondents and frequent public debates about the theme, lets realize that in many shops there disrespect to this legal provision.

Objectives: This study seeks to understand the zeal in meeting the legislated for the sale and consumption of alcoholic beverages.

Methods: A qualitative investigation, using the direct method of gathering information. The study was conducted at the School of Estremoz municipality, located in the central region of Alentejo, Portugal. Comprehensive semistructured interviews were conducted. The sample consisted of ten pupils consumers: five in the 8th grade and five in the 10th grade, aged between 14 and 16 years old. Results: the purchase of alcohol by young people under the age of 16 years old is easy. In the unanimous opinion of the subject, the economic advantage for sellers, resulting transactions, appears to contribute to this act of easy access to alcohol. They claim that newly opened bars are tougher for sale but, after some time the restriction is attenuated by passing the transaction happening without being checked ages of young buyers.

Conclusion: the bars and nightclubs in the region do not guarantee compliance with the restrictions on the sale and consumption of alcohol. Physical appearance is, even where the zeal is greater, a warrant for entry-under 16 years old in bars.

Keywords: Alcohol consumption; teenagers